

## **Massachusetts Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program Summary of the State Selection and Nomination Process to NOAA for FY 2007**

The Massachusetts Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) Request for Responses (RFR) issued on November 14, 2005 resulted in eight applications from various state agencies and municipalities, working in cooperation with many non-governmental land conservation organizations. The applications included CELCP funding requests that totalled almost \$14.5 million and also proposed leveraging additional non-federal match funds in excess of \$20 million. The response to the RFR confirmed the strong desire and significant financial needs for coastal land conservation in the Commonwealth.

A committee including representatives from the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA), the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM), and the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game (DFG) reviewed and ranked the proposals based on selection criteria outlined in the RFR and originally developed in the Massachusetts CELC Plan. Some of the most important selection criteria included a proposed project's ecological value, recreational value, proximity to the coastline, conservation value, and size. The three highest-ranking proposals were selected for nomination to NOAA for consideration under their national selection process. These three state priority projects are summarized below.

- **Center Hill Beach Conservation Project** - This two-phase project, located in Plymouth, includes the purchase and preservation of a 78-acre property, which includes more than a half mile of sand beach and coastal bluff, a freshwater pond, extensive Bio-Map Core Habitat, expansive views, and other desirable attributes. Phase 1 of the project was completed in November 2005 using \$1,675,000 of town funds, and protected the 50-acre "land-side" portion of the property. Phase 2 is the proposed purchase of the 28-acre "ocean-side" portion of the property. This property is a rare conservation opportunity in the state's congested South Shore, which will also link other conservation properties to the coast. The total cost of this project, including both Phase 1 and Phase 2, is \$5,675,000, of which \$2,263,500 in CELCP funding is being requested.
- **Apponagansett Bay Conservation Project** - This project is located in Dartmouth and includes the purchase and preservation of 74 acres of a larger 99-acre property. This project has approximately 3,500 feet of fringing salt marsh shoreline bordering Apponagansett Bay, as well as a mixture of upland fields and forests and other wetlands. The project expands on other public conservation holdings in the area to form a block of conservation lands that will provide significant opportunities for passive recreation, habitat protection, and aesthetic appreciation, all within a couple miles of the highly developed and urbanized city of New Bedford. The total cost for this project is \$8 million of which \$3 million in CELCP funding is being requested.
- **Ipswich River/Great Marsh, Perkins/Treadwell Island Conservation Project** - Located in Ipswich, this project includes the purchase and protection of 130 acres including Perkins Island and its surrounding salt marsh. The island portion of the property is approximately 30 acres and the remaining 100 acres are salt marsh. This project is located within the expansive Great Marsh, which is the largest salt marsh in New England, consisting of more than 25,000 acres. The project has extensive ecological and conservation values because of its size, location of the entire parcel within Bio-Map Core Habitat, and capacity to build on extensive conservation holdings in the Great Marsh area. The total cost for this project is \$1,265,250, of which \$540,250 in CELCP funding is being requested.